

Towards a Prosperous, Sustainable and Equitable Future for All: A Critical Engagement

A two-day conference in honour of K. R. Datye
Supported by WaterAid, New Delhi; SPWD, Delhi; WISE, Pune and Individuals
Organised by SOPPECOM, Pune and TISS, Mumbai
Venue: Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS), Mumbai
Dates: 28 and 29 March 2008

Development sector practitioners, activists, academics, civil society organisations, policy makers, donor agencies and various government institutions and departments have over the last few decades witnessed, experienced or been touched by K. R. Datye's multi-faceted genius, all-ranging thinking and contribution to various fields. He has been able to show that a different, alternative – prosperous, sustainable and equitable – future is possible, feasible and viable especially at a time when the 'TINA' (there is no alternative) syndrome is becoming all pervading under the growing LPG (liberalisation, privatisation and globalisation) regime.



His radically different and new developmental strategy is based on renewable bio-energy and dispersed industrialisation and offers a pathway to a new society that emphasis equitable access to natural and productive resources, is ecologically sustainable, and uses sophisticated and appropriate science and technology (which combines participatory and scientific methods) for a sustained improvement in the living standards of the people.

Biomass and a regenerative eco-economy are central to his ideas, as are preferential rights of access, use and financing for the resource poor, including the women. Implicated are also new ideas about how to integrate education, people's science and people's movements into the developmental strategy. Datye's vision engages with almost all sectors and facets of 'development' including water, energy, materials, infrastructure, institutions, policy, finance and credits, resource literacy and people's science, gender, empowerment.¹

The two-day conference, "Towards a Prosperous, Sustainable, and Equitable Future for All" was part of a felicitation initiative and gave us a chance to re-look at some of his critical ideas and concepts, perhaps re-synthesise them in the form of an alternative developmental vision and strategy and take them up for further research and development, teaching and training, grassroots action and policy engagement. The conference also included a felicitation function in the evening of the first day.

¹ His book, "Banking on Biomass: A New Strategy for Sustainable Prosperity based on Renewable Energy and Dispersed Industrialisation" (1997, Centre for Environment Education, Ahmedabad) outlines his vision and strategy of a prosperous, sustainable and equitable society.



The conference was divided into five sessions each devoted to a developmental sector/aspect where Datye has made significant contributions. Each session comprised of presentations of 2-3 invited papers relating to that sector/theme, comments/remarks by two discussants, an open discussion and summing up by the chairperson of the session. Of the invited papers, one was to present Datye's key

ideas, concepts and contributions relevant to the session theme while the others would critically look at the relevance of these ideas as well as the overall developmental context relevant to the theme. The five themes were:

- 1) Water;
- 2) Energy, materials and infrastructure;
- 3) Institutions and finance;
- 4) Education, resource literacy, people's science and people's movements; and
- 5) The transition to 'Sustainable Prosperity for All'.

The detailed report of the conference will be circulated soon.

The plan of sessions:

28 March 2008	
09:00 to 09:30 am	Registration
09:30 to 10:00 am	Welcome and Introduction
10:00 to 10:30 am	Felicitation of K. R. Datye and Inauguration of the Conference
10:30 to 11:00 pm	Tea
11:00 to 01:00 pm	Water, Biomass and Livelihoods Papers: K. J. Joy, Ujjwala Pendse, A. Vaidyanathan, Biksham Gujja, K. R. Datye Chairperson: Ramaswamy Iyer Discussant: Depinder Singh
01:00 to 02:00 pm	Lunch
02:00 to 03:30 pm	Energy, Materials and Infrastructure Papers: Suhas Paranjape, Prakash Ashtunkar, Girish Sant, Abhaya Datye, G. M. Pillai, K. R. Datye Chairperson: M. P. Parameswaran Discussant: Dinesh Abrol
03:30 to 04:00 pm	Tea

04:00 to 05.30 pm	Institutions and Finance Papers: Seema Kulkarni, Amita Shah, Rajni Bakshi, Vijay Shankar, K. R. Datye Chairperson: V. B. Eswaran Discussant: Shrinivas Khandewale
Felicitation Function, Film on Datye and Dinner	
06:00 to 7:30 pm	Felicitation function
7:30 pm onwards	Premiere of `K. R. Datye: Exploring Energy Pathways`, a documentary on Datye by Atul Pethe and Dinner
29 March 2008	
09:30 to 11.00 am	Education, Resource Literacy, People's Science and People's Movements Papers: K. J. Joy, Sandhya Edlabadkar, S. Parasuraman, Dinesh Abrol, Bharat Patankar, K. R. Datye Chairperson: Kartikeya Sarabhai Discussant: Achyut Das
11.00 to 11.15 am	Tea
11:15 am to 12:45 pm	The Transition to `Sustainable Prosperity for All' Papers: Suhas Paranjape, M. P. Parameswaran, Subodh Wagle, Sudarshan Iyengar, K. R. Datye Chairperson: A. Vaidyanathan Discussant: Kishore Saint
12:45 to 01:30 pm	Future Action and Winding up
01:30 to 02:30 pm	Lunch

Also see Darryl D'monte's column on Datye Felicitation Conference at [infochangeindia](http://www.infochangeindia.org/analysis262.jsp)

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'K.R. Datye: Exploring Energy Pathways'

The conference also had a screening of a documentary film – 'K.R. Datye: Exploring Energy Pathways' made by Atul Pethe. The film is in Marathi with English subtitles.

This film is produced by Atul Pethe Productions, Pune; directed by Atul Pethe and financially supported by Vandana Datye and Satish Thatte.



Mrs. Manorama Datye releasing the Film 'K.R. Datye: Exploring Energy Pathways'

"K. R. Datye is a unique personality. Today even at the age of 82 he works with youthful zest and energy. A civil engineer by profession, he has worked in and contributed immensely to the water and irrigation, energy and basic infrastructure sectors for more than 50 years.

For the last many years, Datye has been focusing on rural development. Water, land and energy are issues close to his heart. Development is necessary for prosperity but of we are uncaring then in the course of development, we also destroy environment and social equilibrium both. With this in mind Datye helped to set up CASAD, SARMET and SOPPECOM three organisations through which he carried out various experiments and studies in eco-regenerative developmental pathways and industrial technologies. The thoughts of this socially aware, creative technologist comprise this '*Aivaj*' and hence this documentary 'K.R. Datye: Exploring Energy Pathways' to communicate to you the approach it comprises." (From jacket of the film DVD)

For purchasing DVDs you can contact SOPPECOM, Pune or Atul Pethe (atul_pethe@hotmail.com; Mobile no. +91-094223 19717). The price of DVD is Rs. 200/-

You can also see the film at

<http://video.google.com/videoplay?docid=-6618479700629446868&q=Aivaj&ei=D9YeSJK0NKPrQOHiqWJDQ>